Alberta Finance
Economic Bulletin

Economic Statistics Released During the Week of May 19, 2003 to May 23, 2003

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Wholesale Trade ($ millions)	March			Alberta's wholesale trade increased by 1.3% in March, and was up 12.8% from the same period last year. Across Canada, wholesale trade was down 0.5% on a monthly basis, but up 8.0% from March 2002 levels. National monthly declines were reported in the computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery sector (-7.8%), the motor vehicles, parts and accessories sector (-2.5%), and the lumber and building materials sector (-1.8). Monthly sale increases in farm machinery, equipment and supplies (+4.8%), apparel and dry goods (+3.7%), and household goods (+2.3%) partly offset the overall decline.
Alberta	3,863	1.3%	12.8%	
Canada	36,568	-0.5%	8.0%	
Retail sales ($ millions)	March			Canadian retail sales fell 0.7% in March, to $26.3 billion. Declines in the automotive (-2.3%) and general merchandise (-1.3%) sectors were largely responsible for the overall reduction. Four out of the five other retail sectors posted monthly increases. Five provinces recorded monthly losses, led by British Columbia (-2.9%), Alberta (-1.3%), and Prince Edward Island (-1.1%). Saskatchewan (1.3%), Newfoundland (0.7%) and Manitoba (0.6%) reported monthly gains.
Alberta	3,246	-1.3%	5.8%	
Canada	26,366	-0.7%	3.7%	
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	April			Canada's annual inflation rate slowed in April to 3.0%, down from 4.3% the previous month. The downward pressure on the CPI came mainly from a drop in gasoline prices of 9.0% from March and refunds received by Ontario electricity customers. Company natural gas rebates introduced in March 2002 continue to keep the yearly CPI inflation rate in Alberta high. The yearly CPI in Alberta fell to 5.9% in April, from 7.6% in the previous month.
Alberta	130.2	0.0%	5.9%	
Canada	121.9	-0.7%	3.0%	